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GBLD 194.04: Reimagining Global Health - Biosocial Perspectives

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Reimagining Global Health: Biosocial Perspectives
GLBD 194

Course Syllabus

Instructor Information

Instructor: Gilbert Quintero, Ph.D.
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Description

This course will examine a set of global health problems rooted in rapidly changing social structures, cultural beliefs and practices, and environmental and biological realities that transcend geopolitical and other imagined boundaries. Students will explore case studies (addressing Ebola, tuberculosis, mental illness, and other topics) and a multidisciplinary literature (including anthropology, epidemiology, history, and biomedicine) centering on how biosocial perspectives might provide a foundation to improve health and well-being on a global level.

Goals

The overall goal of this seminar is to enhance students' understanding of critical global health issues through a thoughtful examination and evaluation of multidisciplinary approaches to global health problems.

Learning Outcomes

After successfully completing this course the student will be able to:

1. Describe the interrelationships between human biological and sociocultural systems and major infectious diseases, chronic ailments, and mental disorders in a global environment;
2. Compare core components of health systems, including etiology, diagnosis, help-seeking, treatment, evaluation of efficacy and effectiveness, and health care traditions and sectors in several different sociocultural settings;
3. Recognize and appraise multidisciplinary theoretical understandings and methodological approaches to global health;
4. Describe and evaluate different approaches to combat both pre-existing and emerging infectious diseases, debilitating chronic ailments, and mental health disorders; and
5. Describe and evaluate programs designed to ensure access to and utilization of quality healthcare.

Requirements and Grading

Grades for the course will be based on performance in the following areas:

- Discussion leadership & participation 25%
- Essay exams (3) 75%

Plus/minus grades will be assigned for this course at the instructor's discretion. Final cumulative grades will be based upon the point totals for each of the requirements outlined above.

Discussion leadership & participation: Each student is required to read the materials assigned for each particular class period and to attend class prepared to lead and engage in critical discussion. Your ability to articulate and analyze the reading materials and the ideas of your classmates in an in-depth fashion will be crucial to your success in this course. This element of the class grade will be based on several factors. First, a portion of this grade will be determined by the instructor's subjective assessment of the student's performance of discussion guidelines. Second, the student will be evaluated on his/her discussion leadership performance. At least one student will be asked to assume the role of presenter for each class. This student will have a command of the assigned readings and organize and facilitate the class discussion. This will include providing productive, academic discussion questions to the class, presenting key concepts, and co-leading discussion with the instructor and any other student presenters. Finally, attendance will count towards a portion of this component of the final class grade. Students who miss more than one class meeting will have points deducted.

Discussion should be organized around these basic points:

- What questions or issues do the authors examine?
- What theoretical approach or framework do the authors utilize?
- What methods do the authors use?
- What evidence do the authors provide to support their arguments? Did you find this argument and support convincing? Why or why not?
- What themes or issues do these readings address that have been covered in other class materials (e.g., readings, discussions)? How are these texts similar or different?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of the reading?

In addition, address your reaction to these readings. What did you particularly agree/disagree with? What did you find to be the most interesting aspect of the reading? What terms, concepts, or explanations are unclear to you?

Essay exams: There will be a total of three in-class essay exams based on course readings and discussions. The third exam will take place during the scheduled final exam period. Please bring a Bluebook for each of these exams.

Texts

Farmer, P., A. Kleinman, J. Kim, M. Basilio, eds. *Reimagining Global Health: An Introduction*. Berkeley: University of California Press. 2013. [RGH]

Kidder, T. *Mountains Beyond Mountains: The Quest of Dr. Paul Farmer, a Man Who Would Cure the World*. New York: Delacorte Press. 2013.

Nichter, M. *Global Health: Why Cultural Perceptions, Social Representations, and Biopolitics Matter*. Tucson: University of Arizona. 2008. [GH]

Course Supplement

A web-based supplement for this class is available on Moodle: <http://umonline.umd.edu/>.

Technical support is provided at: <http://umonline.umd.edu/services-and-support/default.php>.

Schedule

1/Aug 30: Introduction: A Biosocial Approach to Global Health

- Adams et al., Introduction to global health
- Frenk et al., From sovereignty to solidarity
- Koplan et al., Towards a common definition of global health
- RGH: Preface, Chapter 1

2/Sep 6: What is Global Health?: Health Systems in Biosocial Context

- Cueto, The origins of primary health care and selective primary health care
- Fried, Global health is public health
- Newell, Selective primary health care
- Singer & Erickson, Global health and the anthropological paradigm
- WHO World Health Report, Chapter 1
- RGH: Appendix (Declaration of Alma-Ata)

3/Sep 13: Theoretical and Methodological Frameworks

- Janes, Criticizing with impunity?
- Packard & Epstein, Epidemiologists, social scientist, and the structure of AIDS research
- WHO World Health Report, Chapter 2
- RGH: Chapter 2

4/Sep 20: Historical Foundations

- RGH: Chapters 3-5

5/Sep 27: Developing and Implementing Health Delivery Models

- RGH: Chapters 6 & 7

6/Oct 4: Understanding Popular Health Culture: Representations and Perceptions in Context

- GH: Preface, Introduction, Part I (Chapters 1-4)
- **Exam 1** (10/6) (Bring bluebook to class!)

7/Oct 11: The Rhetoric of Global Health

- GH: Part II (Chapters 5-7)

8/Oct 18: Values, Limits and Biopolitics

- IJsselmuiden et al., Evolving values in ethics and global health research
- Benatar et al., Values in global health governance
- RGH: Chapter 9

9/Oct 25: Case Studies: Mental Health and MDRTB

- Farmer, Social scientists and the new tuberculosis
- Kleinman, Global mental health: a failure of humanity
- RGH: Chapter 8

10/Nov 1: Case Studies: How Research Contributes to Universal Health Coverage

- WHO World Health Report, Chapter 3

11/Nov 8: Election Day & Exam

- Note: Election Day, 11/8 – No class
- **Exam 2** (11/10) (Bring bluebook to class!)

12/Nov 15: Case Studies: Syndemics

- Ostrach & Singer, At special risk
- Singer & Bulled, Interlocked infections
- Singer & Clair, Syndemics and public health

13/Nov 22: Case Studies: Mountains Beyond Mountains

- Kidder, Mountains Beyond Mountains
- Note: Thanksgiving Break, 11/24 – No class

14/Nov 29: Uncertain Futures: Global Health in the Anthropocene

- McMichael, Population health in the Anthropocene

- McMichael, Globalization, climate change, and human health
- McMichael & Butler, Promoting global population health
- Steffen et al., The Anthropocene: conceptual and historical perspectives

15/Dec 6: Global Health Priorities: Toward a Next Generation of Research and Application

- WHO World Health Report, Chapter 4 & 5
- RGH: Chapters 10-12
- GH: Chapter 8

16/Dec 15: **Final Exam** 10:10am – 12:10pm Thursday, December 15 (Bring bluebook!)

Reading assignments should be completed by the first class meeting of the week.

This syllabus provides a general plan for the course. Changes may be necessary and will be announced in class.